

Edinburgh on October 24 he expressed the hope that the rectification of frontiers on racial lines taking place in Central and South-Eastern Europe would contribute to stability and peace, but he added some prophetic words. "What we are now witnessing is the revision of the Treaty of Versailles, for which provision was made in the Covenant, but which has never till now been made effective/* The *detente* did not last long. Hitler's speeches revealed a curious irritability, which Sir Neville Henderson interpreted as resentment at the interference which prevented him from enjoying a spectacular military success. Moreover he misinterpreted the continuation of British rearmament as a determination to attack. The tidal wave of enthusiasm for the Munich settlement ebbed rapidly, and at the end of the year two Ministerial declarations indicated that the wind had shifted. The Colonial Secretary announced that the return of the German colonies was not now an issue in practical politics, and the Prime Minister assured his critics in Parliament that if the policy of appeasement failed he would change his course.

The rape of what was left of Bohemia and Moravia on March 15, 1939, ended the Munich truce and the policy of appeasement. Surrender, it was clear, had merely stimulated Hitler's appetite and strengthened the resolve to get his way. In breaking his word to the Prime Minister and in seizing a state alien in blood, language and tradition, he revealed Napoleonic ambitions which instantly restored our old principle of the Balance of Power to favour. Many, perhaps most, Englishmen had been unwilling to fight for the retention of the German minority in a Skv state, but the plausible doctrine of German racial consolidation was now thrown to the winds. The krger problem of our own

security could no longer be shirked. Hitler's action was rebuked by the disillusioned Prime Minister on March 17 at Birmingham, and protests were presented by the British and French Ambassadors at Berlin; but Dictators are never impressed by words. If the Western democracies were once again to resist the domination of Europe by Germany, now was the time to build a peace front. There was, indeed not a moment to lose. The Nazi press proceeded to turn its guns against Poland, who had declined to hand over Danzig and to allow an ex-territorial road through the Corridor on the ground that the demands threatened her political and economic independence. She had readied her decision before the thunderbolt of March 15